

to actually garden with the plains plants. It includes subjects such as growing plants in containers, pruning, creating a native grass lawn, attracting animals to the garden. In this section, there could have been more shots of 'gardens' to showcase how good these plants can look when grown together. This is but a small oversight.

Section 3 (the bulk of the book) details the plants of the western plains and their cultivation. This is followed by the Appendices. This was a real treasure trove of information. Here there was information about indigenous plant suppliers (no point getting excited about growing these plants if you don't know where to buy

them), the vegetation types of the plains and where to see them (to get inspiration), what plants grow where in the landscape, and some suggestions for further reading.

This book will not only look great on your coffee table, but is also very useful. And it serves as a benchmark for how future indigenous planting guides might be written, with attention to detail, and a great passion for the flora.

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The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia: the definitive work on bird identification

by Graham Pizzey and Frank Knight, Edited by Sarah Pizzey

Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers, 9 edn, 2012. ISBN 9780732291938. RRP \$45.00

The latest edition of Pizzey and Knight's *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* is as informative as it is attractive. Produced to aid in the identification of wild bird species in the field, the book provides information and illustrations of 842 bird species found on the Australian continent, its continental islands and its seas. This new edition accounts for the latest information relating to the taxonomy, distribution and classification of Australian birds, meaning 18 species are included in the guide for the first time.

As with past editions, each species is beautifully illustrated and accompanied by detailed text. The plumage is described of a typical adult and differences between males, females and juveniles are highlighted and can be compared back to illustrations for clarification. Outstanding markings are italicized and useful habits and behavioral features follow, for quick recognition in the field. The attention given to the differences between similar species is most valuable. Habitat, breeding season, voice, nest, range and status are described and an updated distribution map accompanies the text. Such extensive detail means this guide is bigger and

The definitive work on bird identification

THE FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA



heavier than most other guides available. While its size might be unappealing for those who like to travel light in the field, it is this detail and accuracy that sets this book apart from other guides.

There are a number of adjustments that have been made to this edition that are intended to make the guide more user-friendly. The quick reference guide, included for the first time in the previous edition, is now spread over twice the number of pages and birds are clearly separated by the environments in which they are most likely seen. This is a vast improvement, and it now serves its purpose of making navigating to appropriate pages much easier. Similarly, the addition of illustrations to the family introductions in the final pages of the book enhances the section. Amateur bird watchers are likely to benefit from these improvements the most; the placement of species in taxonomic order throughout field guides is not necessarily an intuitive arrangement for many. In contrast, the helpfulness of the new section for vagrant species is questionable. When they were to-

gether with related species, and labelled as vagrants, differences were easy to identify. Now, comparison of vagrants with similar species requires plenty of page turning.

The introductory section provides valuable information to first time bird watchers, with basic tips for using binoculars, description of body shapes and parts, explanation of technical names, and advice on the best features to observe that will help with identification. Yet, throughout the whole field guide, it is the illustrations that offer the most. They are enjoyable, informative and inspiring for bird enthusiasts of all levels of experience.

This new edition of Pizzey and Knight's book delivers an outstanding identification resource that continues to be my favourite field guide for Australian birds.

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Planting for wildlife: a practical guide to restoring native woodlands

By Nicola Munro and David Lindenmayer

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria, 2011, 84 pages, 74 figures, paperback. ISBN 9780643103122. RRP \$39.95.

This beautifully illustrated and well written book focuses on the practical aspects for the revegetation of woodlands, with chapters sequentially outlining why it is important to revegetate, where to revegetate, what the layout and composition of a planting should be, how to revegetate, how to maintain and manage a planting and how a planting changes over time. Each chapter begins with a summary outlining the focus of the chapter and the main points, and includes boxed text that may tell the tale of a success story or provide useful information that further explains a term or concept. For example, Box 1.4 defines the term 'ecosystem services' and explains that these can be divided into four groups: provisioning services, regulat-

ing services, supporting services and cultural services. Box 2.4 explains what is meant by connectivity and why it is an important environmental objective. Box 3.1 discusses the effectiveness of windbreaks and why Australian native trees such as eucalypts and casuarinas are better suited for construction of windbreaks than dense conifers such as cypress. Other boxes discuss such topics as: Australia's biodiversity decline, enhancement plantings, seed collection, what a weed is, paddock tree decline, breeding birds in plantings, and more. These boxes ensure the book not only explains how to plant for wildlife but provides the information needed to understand the underlying ecologic principals as well as the reasoning as